

[Communications (Second Report)]

Beliefs and Customs - Folk Stuff

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK 15 Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 20 West 125th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE March 13, 1939

SUBJECT Communications (2nd Report)

1. Date and time of interview March 9th - 11 to 2 P.M.
2. Place of interview Local 36A Office of ACA 95 Broad Street New York City
3. Name and address of informant Josephine Timms, head of local and Pearl , the office girl.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant. Charles Silverman - ACA 10 Bridge Street New York City

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5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Union hall of Postal Telegraph Workers. Large windowed room, partitioned office in corner. One wall all bulletin board. Big book-case of books for circulating library. Chairs all around. Mimeograph machine. Large blackboard announcing schedule of classes in Ballroom dancing, and other educational and cultural programs. Two tables covered with copies of ACA and CIO newspapers. Joe Timms and two office workers in charge. Cheery, alive, atmosphere. Messenger boys coming in at intervals to pay dues to Pearl. A few unemployed waiting to see Joe Timms.

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FORM B Personal History of Informant

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 20 West 125th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE March 13, 1939

SUBJECT Communications (2nd Report)

1. Ancestry Josephine Timms (Joe) is a stout, clear-eyed, woman. Irish, around 35 years old. Lively, co-operative, talks straight to the point. Angles everything from soup to nuts to plug the union. Worked many years in Postal Tel and was active as a rank and file leader in forming the union. Is respected and admired by rank and filers. She is a highly intelligent, vigorous, fighting woman, vibrant and young. New York-Irish to the core.

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2. Place and date of birth
3. Family
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates
7. Special skills and interests
8. Community and religious activities
9. Description of informant
10. Other Points gained in interview

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FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York

NAME OF WORKER Arnold Manoff

ADDRESS 20 West 125th Street, N.Y.C.

DATE March 13, 1939

SUBJECT Communications (2nd Report) JOE TIMMS —

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"Hello, you wanna hang around today? Sure. I didn't have a chance to go through the files. I have a batch of stuff at home. In the days we were first gettin' organized, we used to do a lot of that stuff. Boy, the stunts we pulled! You shoulda seen some of the leaflets we got out in those days, wisecracks, poetry and everythin'! (Started to go through files and dig out batches of old leaflets, bulletins, etc.)

We had a merit system, yeh but we called it the demerit system. This is how it worked. The boss sat a quota for each worker; you had to send a certain number of messages in an hour and paste up a certain number. It went somethin' like this, I don't remember exactly.

If you were short one you lost 5 points. If you more over one, you gained 5 points. Then you lost merits for lateness, absence, errors and so on. Then accordin' to your merits you were shifted around. You know its a 34 hour job and there are three shifts. The boss would add up your merits and every 3 months you'd be shifted accordin' to how good your record was. So those that had the most merits got first pick. That made the workers spped up and compete with each other.

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"Well, that was one of the things we went to town on. We had a whole campaign on it.

We have a total membership of 18,000 now in the ACA. 10,000 of that is in the telegraph division. When we organize the Western Union, that'll bring us 45,000 more.

Yeh, we ran dancin' classes for the members. We asked them what kind a dancin' they wanted. They could a had any kind you know, interpretive and that stuff but they voted on ballroom dancin. A lot a them don't know how to dance. There was one feller I used to see around at the affairs; he couldn't dance a step. Now I see him, shaggin' all over the place."

ACA NEWS - March 4th SPARKS C.W. Preble Book No. 1374 Sparks, a mighty man is he. All he does is pound a key. And listen to the ships at sea He copies weather and the press And listens for an S.O.S. His rig is all shiny bright His hook is clear When into port

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the ship does steer, He's ready for a little fun. At the finish of the run. O, Sparks, a mighty man is he. He helps to make it safe at sea

COMMUNICATIONS JOURNAL - August 1937 Personal and Impersonal

[2?]"Have you all taken a good look at the silver finished cuspidors at the entrance of all the departments at the Main? My, my, such class. Could it be possible, that the ten cents increase in the association dues had anything to do with the purchase of such a priceless collection of cuspidors — ?"

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"Not so long ago the company issued notices to the heads of departments on the importance of economy, now that the slow season is here. We notice that there is no longer the supply of straight pins in either the ladies lockers or rest rooms which were once used by the madames in case of an emergency.

"Golly are they that bad off? What do you say we all chip in and buy them a package."

"The champ slave driver of Postal is slave drivin better than ever these days. We notice he is talking to himself. Bet the conversation is interesting. It'll soon be a padded cell for him and anyone unfortunate enough to be working under him."

"We notice a bulletin in the ladies room which makes us wonder if O'Keefe is a racing man. But we guess not. This notice refers to keeping stalls clean. Apparently O'Keefe thinks of his female staff as horses.

He sure can drive them."

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"The march of communications has inspired more than one song. The introduction of the night letter brought forth "Send Me A Kiss By Wire." First time telephone service between N.Y.C. and San Francisco during the Panama Pacific Exposition there in 1915 inspired "Hullo Frisco." And the first successful radiophone conversation between Arlington and Honolulu inspired "Hellow Hawaii." ***** COMMUNICATIONS JOURNAL - August 1937 Postal is spending plenty of money these days Broadcasting past heroes and fine yesterdays But Postal workers, wise to Postal ways Are crying, "Cut out the baloney and give us a raise." *****

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ACA BULLETIN WHICH ARE YOU Are you an active member The kind that would be missed Or are you just contented That your name is on the list? Do you attend the meetings And mingle with the flock Or do you stay at home And criticize and knock Do you take an active part To help the work along Or are you satisfied To be the kind that just belong Do you ever [?] go to visit A member who is sick Or leave the work to just a few And talk about the clique There's quite a program scheduled That I'm sure you've heard about, So come to the meetings often And help with hand and heart. Don't be just a member, but take active part, Think this over, member, you know right from wrong, Are you an active member. Or do you just belong.